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# UAPI Conference peers into future of education

Monterey, California, Naval Postgraduate School

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## UAPI Conference Peers into Future of Education

Gone are the days when university faculty and administrators grappled with what courses to include in a homeland security curriculum.

The discussion among 27 educators convened at the annual Center for Homeland Defense and Security University and Agency Partnership's (UAPI) annual Faculty Development Workshop June 10-14 centered more on producing future leaders, fostering interagency cooperation and optimizing education as homeland security topics shift and expand.



"Fewer faculty members are asking 'how to' and more are talking about adding value and asking how we develop leaders," said Steve Recca, CHDS Co-Director of Partnership Programs.

Twenty-seven university educators convened in Monterey for the Center for Homeland Defense and Security University and Agency Partnership's annual Faculty Development Workshop. Held each summer since 2010, the weeklong sessions are designed to keep professors, administrators, and government agency officials up to date on educational trends and challenges in homeland security. UAPI has more than 300 educational partners across the nation.

Sessions typically mirror that of the CHDS curriculum covering subject matter ranging from an introduction to homeland security to the more complex subjects such as critical infrastructure protection. Attendees said the conference helps keep their programs at the leading edge of homeland security studies.

University of Maryland adjunct professor and hazardous materials technician with the Arlington County (Va.) Fire Department James Johnson said gaining insight from academic practitioners such as those on the CHDS faculty was beneficial and will be helpful as he articulates his school's vision for its program as it is vetted for accreditation.

"Not only do we get the academic background we get the view from practitioner-scholars in their fields," Johnson said.

Jess Soto Jr., assistant professor at the National War College, said the shared curriculum and conference material would be beneficial as he considers incorporating elements of the CHDS critical infrastructure protection and homeland security intelligence into a political science program.

"Our program is for senior decision makers at the Department of Defense," he said. "I can use the material from the UAPI web site for the syllabus."

Along with learning how professors approach building and teaching their curriculum was equally beneficial as her institution seeks to intersperse CHDS concepts into its burgeoning homeland security program, said Kelly Otter, associate dean at Northeastern University in Boston.

"To have the opportunity to see the Naval Postgraduate School faculty expertise and their background was extremely valuable," Otter said. "It gave me a sense of the depth and expertise of the faculty here and what we would like to weave into our program. I want the curriculum at Northeastern (University) to be at the next step in the evolution of homeland security."

Part of reaching that next step would be to ensure student quality and determining the appropriate prerequisites for undergraduates as well as what skill-sets graduates should possess. Traditionally students have come from law enforcement, emergency management or some other first-responder field, but requirements should also be established for non-traditional majors who wish to enter a homeland security-related field.

"Ultimately, we want to create the best possible professionals in the field," Otter said. "We have to be clear about the required skills and abilities that need to be studied. We need to ensure the academics are strong across the board while building a professional cadre and make sure the academic opportunity is spread and level value across the board."



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